

# Trade, Health and Well-being Symposium



Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019  
The Life Sciences Hub, Cardiff  
10:30 - 15:00



# The public health implications of Brexit: A Health Impact Assessment approach

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# Welcome to the Wales Health Impact Assessment Support Unit

This site provides information on the Wales HIA Support Unit, health impact assessment (HIA) and the process as practiced in Wales, news and recent developments. It provides a resource to those currently practicing HIA and those who are new to it and looking for information and evidence. There are details of completed HIAs in Wales and other HIA activities from the Unit plus links to useful resources.

[read more](#)

# Aims

- To identify the **potential health and well-being impacts** of Brexit in Wales - whether physical, mental or social
- To **support** organisations and decision makers in Wales
- To **advocate** for health and well-being in planning and policy development in response to Brexit
- To move beyond short term no deal preparations to consider the **long term implications** for health and well-being in Wales
- To conduct a holistic analysis with a focus on the **social determinants** of health, **inequalities** and specific **population groups** – **how will Brexit affect people's lives, well-being and livelihoods?**

# Overview

- Carried out July – December 2018 led by WHIASU in Public Health Wales
- Short timeframe and in a period of uncertainty and rapid political developments
- Internal working group and cross sector Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) established for steer and governance
- Regular updates to Board of Public Health Wales as part of wider Brexit work
- Published January 21<sup>st</sup> 2019
- Remains the only HIA of Brexit published

## Brexit HIA Process:

1. Screening
2. Scoping
3. Appraisal of three types evidence: Population, published, qualitative
4. Report and recommendations
5. Review and reflection including monitoring and evaluation

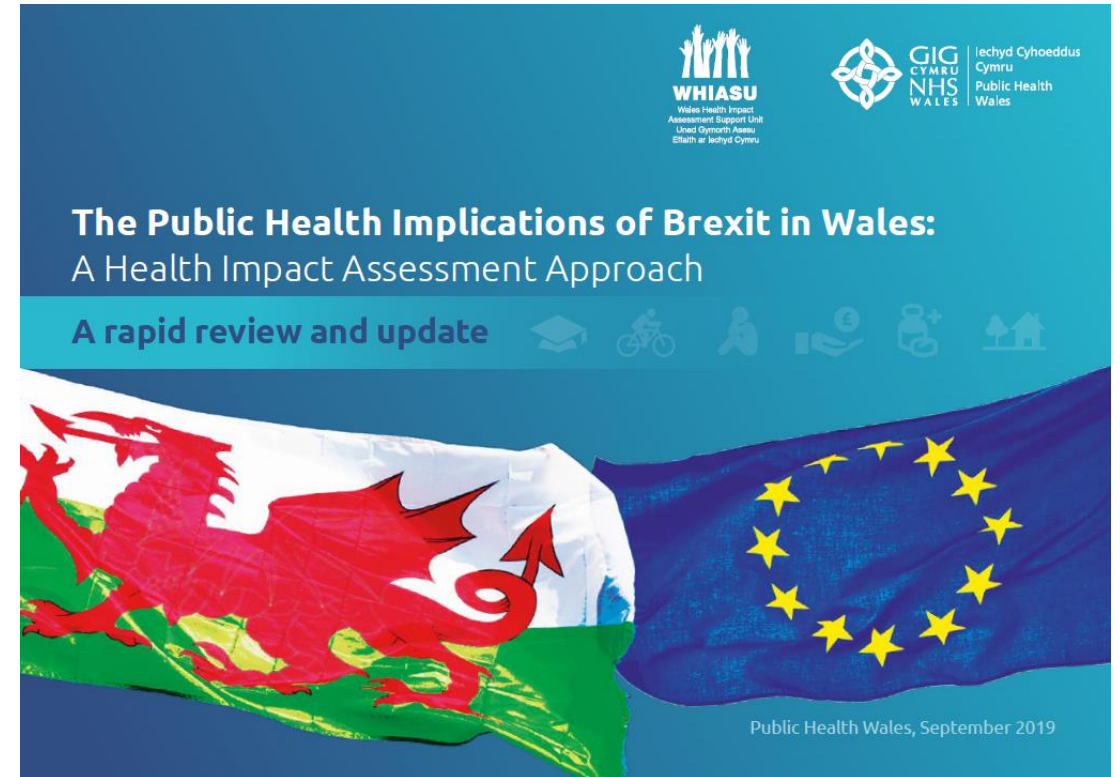
## Considerations:

- Specific Brexit scenarios not assessed
- Quality and nature of evidence: robust, independent, credible, contested
- Acknowledging and reflect the range of (sometimes conflicting) perspectives
- Direct and indirect impacts
- Certainty and uncertainty
- Scale and severity of impact: who will be most affected?
- Prioritisation

# Rapid Review and Update

January 21<sup>st</sup> to September 13<sup>th</sup> 2019

- The update was published on Friday October 11th
- All the original impacts identified remain valid
- Emerging evidence and policy has changed the likelihood and/or intensity of some impacts
- Some new areas of impact identified



# Findings



# Policy mechanisms through which Brexit directly impacts on health and well-being

- Changing regulatory standards and legal frameworks
- **Terms of future trade policy and trade agreements**
- End of freedom of movement, changes to immigration policies
- Rights of EU Nationals to live and work in the UK
- Regulatory divergence – customs and border impacts
- Loss of jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice and EU Charter of Fundamental Rights
- Reduced access to key coordinating public health systems
- Reduced access to data, intelligence and evidence sharing
- Reduced access to EU funding
- Leaving the single market and / or customs union

# Mechanisms through which Brexit indirectly impacts on health and well-being

- Economic decline, inflation and linked reduction in funding for the public sector, infrastructure and key community assets
- Increased uncertainty over the future
- Increase in hate crime
- Increased political engagement and participation

# Direct impacts on the following determinants of health

- Access to services: health and social care services; medicines; staffing; clinical trials
- Food safety, standards, supply and cost
- Alcohol and Tobacco
- Environmental regulations: air quality and bathing water
- Working conditions
- Employment and skills
- EU funding for community and economic investment, agriculture and research
- Human rights

Trade policy and agreements were a key policy mechanism contributing to the majority of potential impacts identified on the social determinants

# Indirect impacts

- Mental well-being
- Family life
- Community resilience and cohesion

# Potential impacts identified: population groups

- Whole population
- Those at potential risk of increased negative impact:
  - Families impacted by uncertain / new immigration regulations
  - Children and young people
  - EU citizens living in Wales
  - People who are living on low income
  - **People who are unemployed / at risk of unemployment**
  - People living in areas with poor economic and health indicators
  - **People living in areas where large employers may move**
  - Areas of Wales that have been significant beneficiaries of EU funding
  - People in need of health and social care services
  - Black and minority ethnic groups
  - **Farmers / rural communities**
  - **Ports** and Coastal areas

## Population groups – some examples

- Economic analysis suggests there will be different impacts on employment regionally, by sector and by gender, dependent on different Brexit scenarios (Morris, 2018).
- In Wales, it is estimated that 21% of men classed as low educated, and 17% of men classed as mid education level, work in industries that are very highly exposed to changes in trade under the WTO rules (Levell & Keiller, 2018).
- *“Farmers risk high tariffs and non-tariff barriers on exports, which would render their business uncompetitive, while simultaneously having to adjust to a new UK policy for funding. This could have detrimental effects on an industry—and rural communities”* (p5). House of Lords (2017)

## Key Findings – Overview

- A wide range of direct **potential** impacts across the *determinants of health* – many of which affect the whole population.
- A wide range of **potential population groups** affected
- Probable moderate-major **negative impacts** in the short/med term
- Some possible moderate-major **opportunities** identified in the long term – all contingent on policy direction and investment
- Indirect impact on *mental well-being possible* due to uncertainty, economic impacts, community and family relationships, potential loss of rights
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFG Act) provides a *unique context* via which Wales could maximise any positive impact
- *Trade and trade agreements are a key determinant of health*

# Conclusions on trade agreements and health in the Brexit HIA

- There may be **risks and opportunities** for health in future trade agreements post Brexit and these will require **scrutiny and advocacy** by public health experts to ensure that population health and well-being are protected and promoted.
- This is likely to be a **complex and large-scale task** for public health, given the potential increased volume of bilateral trade agreements that may occur post Brexit
- This will also have **workforce development** implications for public health, given that internationally there has been limited focus within public health practice, education and research on engaging with globalised trade policy (Greenberg & Shiau, 2014).



“The health community needs greater capacity at all levels - international, regional and state - to enable effective engagement with trade policy and issues relating to trade and investment agreements”

Delany et al (2018) BMC Public Health 18, Article number: 602 (2018)



## Recommendation from the Brexit HIA

**The public health system should consider how to build knowledge, skills and capacity to influence and contribute to trade agreements.**



# How can Health Impact Assessment contribute to the development of “healthy trade policy” in future ?

- HIA is recognised as a key method for the analysis of the health implications of trade agreements
- Strengths include transparency and a focus not only on medicines and health services, but also the social determinants of health and inequalities.
- HIA is a tool through which to influence not only individual trade agreements, but longer term policy development through a “health in all policies approach”
- An aim of today is to learn from colleagues about other methods and approaches that can be utilised and to discuss how we can build the mechanisms and capacity in Wales to contribute to “healthy trade policy”.

## The developing picture ...

- The House of Commons International Trade Committee (2018) has been examining how the UK Government should engage stakeholders in future trade policy.
- Their report recommended that “***Business and civil society groups should be involved in the production of impact assessments (and that these assessments should) consider economic as well as non economic impacts***”.
- “***A Trade Governance Model that Works for Everyone***” has been developed by a coalition of business groups, trade unions and civil society.
- *The Faculty of Public Health has published a “***Blueprint for a public health approach to Post Brexit Trade agreements***”*
- ***More on this later !***



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**Thank You**  
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